

Genesis 2:10-14

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A river flowed out of Eden and divided into four other rivers, the Pishon, the Gihon, the Tigris, and the Euphrates.

In verses 10-14, we find more details of the description of *Eden*. The *four rivers* do not pinpoint the exact geographical location of Eden, but they do suggest a potential connection with Mesopotamia. The river *Pishon's* name is derived from the Hebrew verb *push*, meaning "to spring up." The river *Gihon's* name is based on a verb meaning "to burst forth." The location of the *land Havilah* is unknown, but it is mentioned four more times in Genesis. Havilah had gold and precious stones, but Eden had the tree of life and the presence of God. The land of *Cush* may refer to a region of East Africa, possibly including Southern Egypt and Northern Sudan. Modern scholars suggest it could be Ethiopia.

The *Tigris* is one of two great rivers in Mesopotamia. It begins in southeastern Turkey and flows into the Persian Gulf. Many important cities were found along the Tigris, including Nineveh and Asshur. Assyria was a major empire in the region of the upper Tigris. The *Euphrates* and Tigris rivers outline the land called Mesopotamia. In fact, the name Mesopotamia means "between the rivers." The ancient city of Babylon was built near the Euphrates. This river divided the Hittite and Egyptian empires.

Biblical Text

¹⁰ Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it divided and became four rivers. ¹¹ The name of the first is Pishon; it flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹² The gold of that land is good; the bdellium and the onyx stone are there. ¹³ The name of the second river is Gihon; it flows around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴ The name of the third river is Tigris; it flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.